

Appln. No. 10/716,260

Docket No. 7202-48

Amendment

Reply to Office Action dated November 12, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method for making retaining net knots, such as rock and avalanche fences, wherein a knot (4) comprises a first and a second rope (2,3) crossing over each other and a junction (6) binding said ropes in a given crossover area, characterized in that it comprises

the method comprising the steps of:

placing a first and a second U elements (7,8) astride said first rope (2), each with the same orientation and close to said second rope (3) on opposite sides thereof[.]:

linking the ends (7d,7e) of the first U element (7) to the ends (8d,8e) of the second U element (8) by means of at least one bridge element (9) overlying said second rope; (3); and

clamping said at least one bridge element (9) on said second rope, (3)

wherein, during the clamping step, the ropes press each other at their crossover area, because of the displacement of the contacting strands, reducing the overall thickness of the first and second ropes pressed together to 1 to 4/3 of the rope diameter in such a way that the ropes are forced to lie substantially in the same plane at each knot of the net.

2. (Currently amended) A knot (4) of a retaining net (1), such as rock or avalanche fence and the like, of the type comprising a first and a second rope (2,3) crossing over each other and a junction (6) for binding the ropes together, characterized in that wherein said junction (6) comprises:

a first and a second U element (7,8) astride said first rope (2), with equally oriented wings close to the second rope (3) on opposite sides thereof[.]:

at least one bridge element (9) linking the ends (7d,7e) of the wings wings (7b,7e) of the first U element (7) to the adjacent ends (8d,8e) of the wings wings (8b,8e) of the second U element (8), and overlying the second rope (3); and

Appln. No. 10/716,260

Docket No. 7202-48

Amendment

Reply to Office Action dated November 12, 2005

clamping means (10,20) for clamping said at least bridge element (9) on the second rope (2),

wherein the bridge element comprises an arch which merges with the adjacent ends of the first and second U elements and is integral with the latter to form a unique piece, and

wherein said unique piece has a given distance measured between a tangent line at an intrados of an arch of the bridge element and the plane defined by tangent lines at the intrados of curved bases of first U element and second U element, and

wherein said given distance is between 1 and 4/3 of the rope diameter.

3. (Currently amended) [[A]] The knot (4) according to claim 2, characterized in that wherein said bridge element (9) comprises an arch element (9d) linking an end (7d) of a wig wing (7b) of the U element (7) to an adjacent end (8d) of a wig wing (8b) of the second U element (8).

4. (Currently amended) [[A]] The knot (4) according to claim 3, characterized in that said arch element (9d) is formed integrally with said first U element (7) and with said second U element (8).

5. (Currently amended) [[A]] The knot (4) according to claim 2, characterized in that wherein said bridge element (9) comprises a yoke (9e) linking an end (7e) of a wig wing (7e) of the first U element (7) to an adjacent end (8e) of a wig wing (8e) of the second U element (8).

6. (Currently amended) [[A]] The knot (4) according to claim 2, characterized in that wherein the clamping means (10) comprise two nuts (15,16) screwing on the ends (7e,8e) of two wings (7b,8b) of said U elements (7,8).

7. (Currently amended) [[A]] The knot (4) according to claim 2, characterized in that wherein the clamping means (20) comprise two heads (21,22) formed through riveting, the heads corresponding to in correspondance of the ends (7e,8e) of two wigs wings (7b,8b) of said U element (7,8).

Appln. No. 10/716,260

Docket No. 7202-48

Amendment

Reply to Office Action dated November 12, 2005

8. (Currently amended) A junction (6) for binding two ropes (2,3) together in a knot (4) of a retaining net, (1), such as rock or avalanche fence and the like, characterized in that it comprises the junction comprising:

a first and a second U elements (7,8), laid side-by-side and equally oriented, and at least one bridge element (9) linking the ends (7d,7e) of the first U element (7) to the adjacent ends (8d,8e) of the second U element (8), used to close the U elements, and clamping means (10,20) of said at least one bridge element,

wherein the bridge element comprises an arch which merges with the adjacent ends of the first and second U elements and is integral with the latter to form a unique piece.

wherein said unique piece has a given distance measured between a tangent line at an intrados of an arch of the bridge element and the plane defined by tangent lines at the intrados of curved bases of first U element and second U element, and

wherein said given distance is between 1 and 4/3 of the rope diameter.

9. (Currently amended) [[A]] The junction (6) according to claim 8, characterized in that wherein said bridge element (9) comprises an arch (9d) linking an end (7d) of a wig (7b) wing of the first U element (7) to an adjacent end (8d) of a wig (8b) wing of the second U element (8).

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently amended) [[A]] The junction (6) according to claim 8, characterized in that wherein said bridge element (9) comprises a yoke (9e) linking an end (7e) of a wig (7e) wing of the first U element (7) to an adjacent end (8e) of a wig (8e) wing of the second U element (8).

12. (Currently amended) [[A]] The junction (6) according to claim 8, characterized in that wherein the clamping means (10) comprise two nuts (15,16) screwing on the ends (7e,8e) of two wigs (7b,8b) wings of said U elements (7,8).

Appln. No. 10/716,260

Docket No. 7202-48

Amendment

Reply to Office Action dated November 12, 2005

13. (Currently amended) [[A]] The junction (6) according to claim 8, characterized in that wherein the clamping means (20) comprise two heads (21,22) formed through riveting, the heads corresponding to in correspondance of the ends (7e,8e) of two wings (7b,8b) wings of said U elements (7,8).